

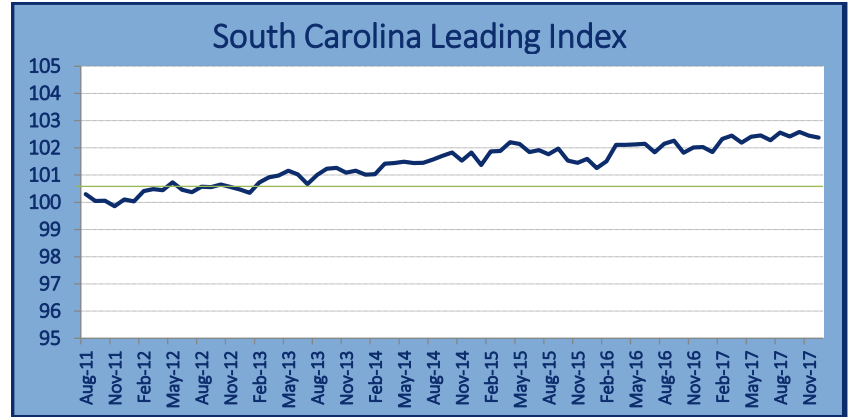


South Carolina
Department of Commerce
Just right for business.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

The South Carolina Leading Index (SCLI) fell 0.08 points last month, ending with a value of 102.37.

Key metrics were mixed in December. The number of issued housing permits decreased 8.2 percent, and permit valuation stayed nearly flat (-0.1 percent). Additionally, unemployment claims rose 46.0 percent month-over-month. The Dow Jones Composite Average, however, was up month-over-month (+1.0 percent), as was the state average for weekly manufacturing hours (+1.6 percent).



Source: S.C. Department of Commerce

The Conference Board's national Leading Economic Index rose 0.6 percent in December to 107.0, following a benchmark revision that reindexed the 100 level to the year 2016. Formerly, the benchmark year was 2010. Solid growth is expected into the new year, as index readings over 100 forecast expansion of the economy.

- Brandon Wilkerson

KEY S.C. INDICATORS

Income

+0.6%

State Personal Income

increased to \$203.6 billion in the 3rd quarter of 2017.

U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

-2.8%

S.C. Stock Index

fell 4.63 points in December, closing at 160.89 for the month.

Bloomberg

Real Estate

+4.2%

Median Home Sales Price

rose \$8,100 from the prior month to \$199,600 for December.

South Carolina Association of Realtors

-8.2%

Residential Building Permits

fell by 213 permits from the prior month to 2,382 in December.

U.S. Census Bureau

Employment

-0.1%

Nonfarm Employment

decreased by 1,400 net non-seasonally adjusted jobs from the prior month.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

-0.1%

Labor Force

decreased by 1,396 to 2,323,976, seasonally-adjusted, in December.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+1.6%

Manufacturing Weekly Hours

rose to 44.8 hours in December from the prior month, as revised.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+4.3%

Available Online Job Postings

increased by 2,600 positions in December to a seasonally-adjusted 62,800 job postings.

The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index

+0.1%

Unemployment Rate

rose to 4.1 percent, seasonally-adjusted, in Dec.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

About S.C. Commerce's Research Division

The Research Division is a highly-skilled, multidisciplinary team of professionals that collects, examines and disseminates data to support economic development in South Carolina. The division furnishes information to companies considering an investment in the state and produces rigorous analysis for stakeholders of all kinds.

Those who wish to receive S.C. Commerce's monthly Economic Outlook can e-mail bwilkerson@SCcommerce.com.

South Carolina Employment

Non-Seasonally Adjusted Wage and Salary Employment

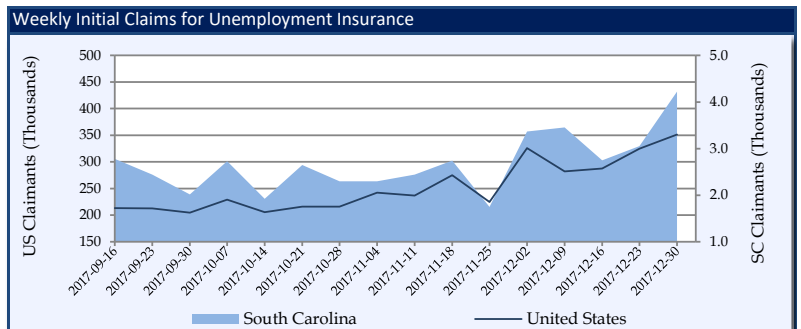
South Carolina's total non-seasonally adjusted, nonfarm employment fell by 1,400 net jobs to 2,120,700 in December, a 0.1 percent decline from revised November numbers but 2.1 percent higher than one year ago. The Construction sector led all others in job gains for the month, netting 1,400 jobs. Other sectors making net gains for the month were Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+1,100); Manufacturing (+900); and Educational and Health Services (+300). The Information sector was flat month-over-month. The sectors reporting the largest net job losses were Professional and Business Services (-2,800); Leisure and Hospitality (-2,000); and Government (-700). Compared to one year ago, the state economy has added 44,600 nonfarm jobs.

Industry Sector	December 2017	Previous Month	Previous Year	% Change Month Ago	% Change Year Ago
Goods Producing	355,200	353,000	337,800	0.62%	5.15%
Natural Resources and Mining	4,200	4,300	4,300	-2.33%	-2.33%
Construction	99,600	98,200	90,900	1.43%	9.57%
Manufacturing	251,400	250,500	242,600	0.36%	3.63%
Service Providing	1,765,500	1,769,100	1,738,300	-0.20%	1.56%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	413,100	412,000	402,700	0.27%	2.58%
Information	26,300	26,300	26,400	0.00%	-0.38%
Finance	100,600	100,700	98,800	-0.10%	1.82%
Professional and Business Services	280,300	283,100	282,200	-0.99%	-0.67%
Educational and Health Services	254,400	253,800	251,900	0.24%	0.99%
Leisure and Hospitality	241,900	243,900	232,000	-0.82%	4.27%
Other Services	75,600	75,300	73,900	0.40%	2.30%
Total Private	1,747,400	1,748,100	1,705,700	-0.04%	2.44%
Government	373,300	374,000	370,400	-0.19%	0.78%
Total Nonfarm	2,120,700	2,122,100	2,076,100	-0.07%	2.15%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Weekly Unemployment Claims

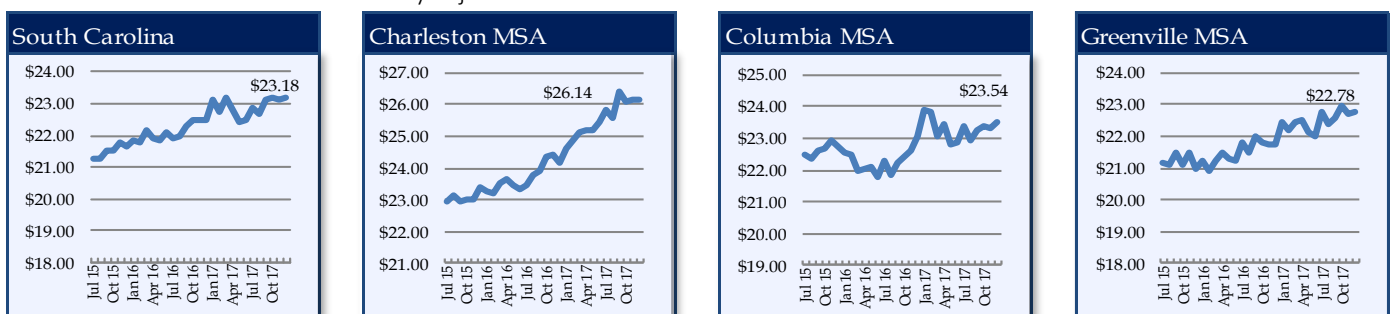
The average number of initial reported claims for unemployment insurance in the state increased in December. The average for the month was 3,369 weekly initial claims, up 46.0 percent versus November but down 15.1 percent compared to one year ago. Among the top six MSAs, Greenville (+81.8 percent), Spartanburg (+44.2 percent) and Columbia (+38.6 percent) reported the largest increases versus November. None of the top six MSAs reported a decrease in claims month-over-month.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Average Hourly Earnings

These charts present the average hourly earnings of all employees in private industry, based on a monthly national survey of businesses. The data are not seasonally adjusted.



Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

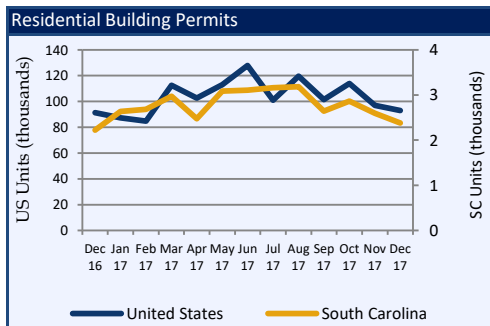
Real Estate & Business Activity

In December, the number of building permits issued in South Carolina for new residential construction fell 8.2 percent to 2,382. This figure was 7.2 percent higher than one year ago. Valuation for the permits fell 0.1 percent month-over-month but was 19.9 percent higher than one year ago. Total closings rose 5.7 percent compared to November, and the median sales price rose 4.2 percent. Foreclosures decreased 14.6 percent month-over-month. For the six largest MSAs, total closings were up month-over-month for all but Florence, which reported a 11.5 percent decrease.

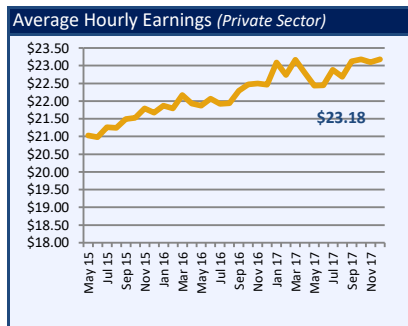
	Month	Current	Previous Year	% Change Year Ago	2017 YTD	2016 YTD	% Change YTD
Closings	December	6,468	6,377	1.4%	83,570	79,992	4.5%
Median Sales Price*	December	\$199.6	\$187.0	6.7%	\$189.3	\$180.0	5.1%
Foreclosures	December	1,442	1,791	-19.5%	21,212	25,330	-16.3%
Residential Building Permits -Total	December	2,382	2,223	7.2%	33,794	31,162	8.4%
Residential Building Permits -Valuation*	December	\$567,831	\$473,627	19.9%	\$7,704,540	\$6,236,651	23.5%

* Thousands of US dollars. Source: S.C. Association of Realtors, RealtyTrac, U.S. Census.

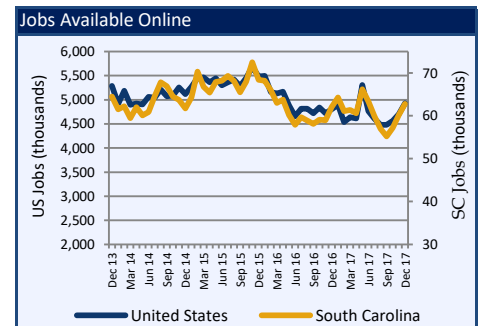
Business Activity



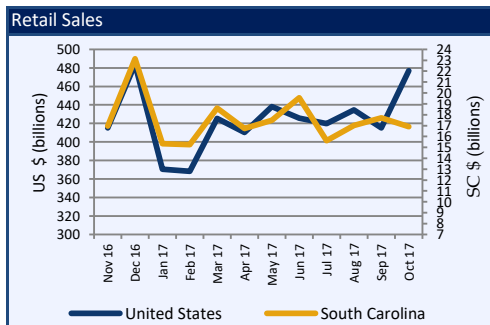
Source: U.S. Census



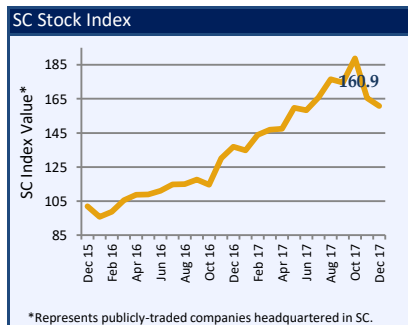
Source: U.S. Department of Labor



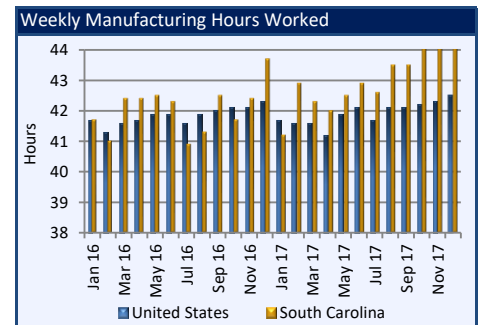
Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index



Source: South Carolina Department of Revenue

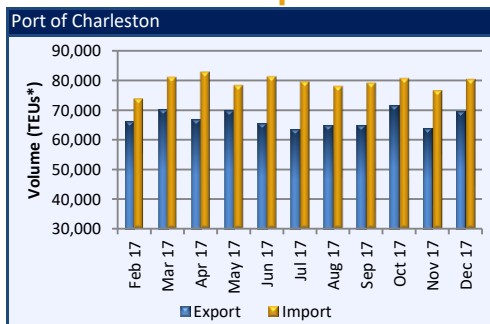


Source: Bloomberg

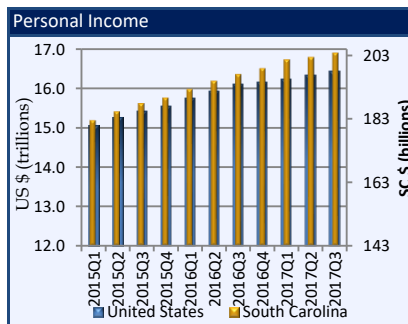


Source: U.S. Department of Labor

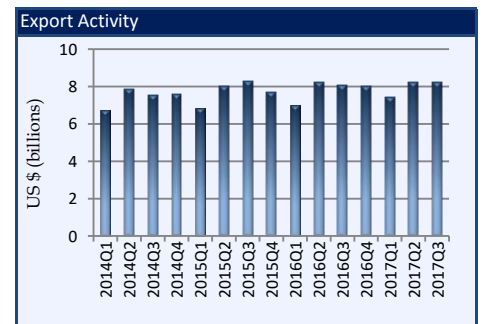
Income and Output



*Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units. Source: SC Ports Authority



Source: U.S. Census



Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census

Regional Updates

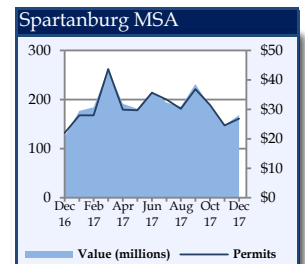
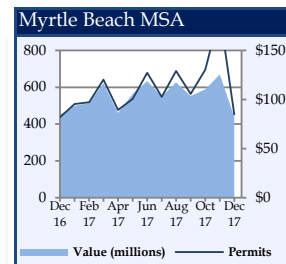
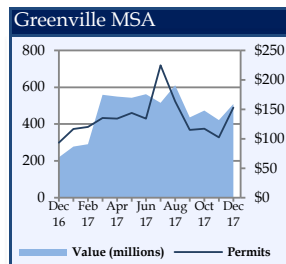
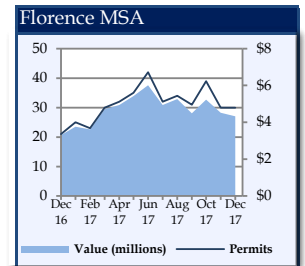
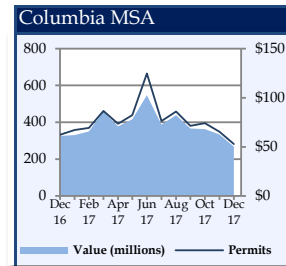
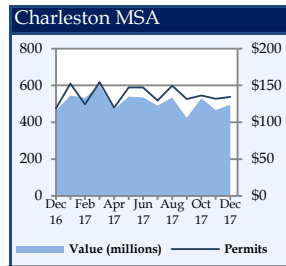
The South Carolina Regional Update provides a snapshot of the most recent economic figures for the six largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) in the state.

Home Sales

MSA	Indicator	Dec 16	Dec 17
Charleston	Sales Volume	1,524	1,541
	Median Price (000's)	\$244	\$269
Columbia	Sales Volume	927	957
	Median Price (000's)	\$155	\$162
Florence	Sales Volume	149	162
	Median Price (000's)	\$113	\$139
Greenville	Sales Volume	967	1,061
	Median Price (000's)	\$185	\$191
Myrtle Beach	Sales Volume	1,047	1,061
	Median Price (000's)	\$175	\$186
Spartanburg	Sales Volume	349	367
	Median Price (000's)	\$145	\$167
South Carolina	Sales Volume	6,377	6,468
	Median Price (000's)	\$187.0	\$199.6

Source: S.C. Association of Realtors.

Building Permits



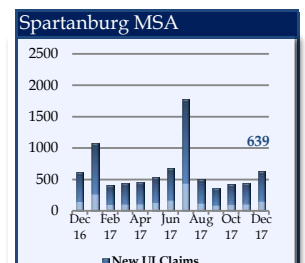
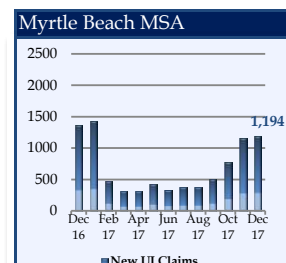
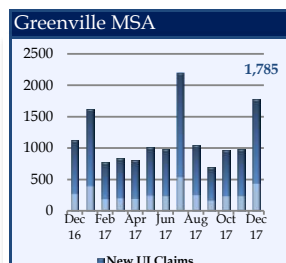
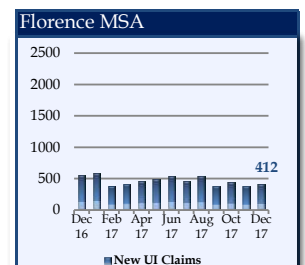
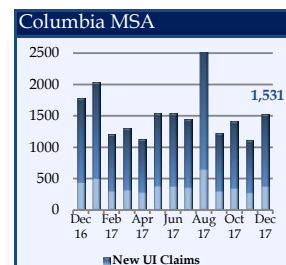
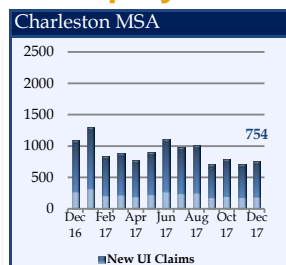
Source: U.S. Census

Employment

MSA	Indicator	Nov 17	Dec 17
Charleston	Employment (000's)	364.7	361.8
	Unemployment Rate	3.3	3.5
Columbia	Employment (000's)	384.1	381.4
	Unemployment Rate	4.0	4.2
Florence	Employment (000's)	90.9	91.0
	Unemployment Rate	4.5	4.8
Greenville	Employment (000's)	406.9	407.1
	Unemployment Rate	3.5	3.8
Myrtle Beach	Employment (000's)	177.9	173.8
	Unemployment Rate	5.0	5.8
Spartanburg	Employment (000's)	149.9	149.4
	Unemployment Rate	3.8	4.0
South Carolina	Employment (000's)	2,232.6	2,227.5
	Unemployment Rate	4.0	4.1

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (unadjusted figures)

Unemployment Insurance Claims



Source: SCDOC analysis of SCDEW data

Projected Population Growth by MSA (2017 to 2022)

10.3%

Charleston

5.7%

Columbia

6.0%

Greenville

14.4%

Myrtle Beach

4.5%

Spartanburg

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online, January 2018